

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully solicited.

Claims 29 through 94, 136, 143, 149, 155 through 164, and 173 through 192 are pending, with Claims 29, 38, 39, 44, 49, 50, 58, 66, 67, 79, 80, 92, 93, 94, 136, 143, 149, 155, 158, 161 through 164, 173, 181, 182, 187, and 192 being independent. Claims 29 through 38, 67 through 94, and 173 through 192 were allowed. Claims 39 through 66 and 155 through 164 were withdrawn from consideration. Claims 95 through 135, 137 through 142, 144 through 148, and 150 through 154 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 136, 143, and 149 have been amended.

REQUEST FOR PRIORITY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Applicants respectfully request acknowledgment of receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents, which were filed on March 22, 1999 in parent Application No. 09/170,653 filed October 14, 1998.

FURTHER REMARKS

Claims 99 and 118 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 4th paragraph. Claims 95 through 135, 137 through 142, 144 through 148, and 150 through 154 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,291,302 (Gordon, et al.). And Claims 136, 143, and 149 were objected to and indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. All rejections and objections are respectfully traversed and are submitted to have been obviated by the cancellation without prejudice of the rejected

claims and the rewriting of the objected-to claims, Claims 136, 143, and 149, in independent form.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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